

✓ Please insert the following new paragraph on page 6, after line 22 and before line 23:

a2 --Fig. 3B is a detailed view of the axial passage of Fig. 3 showing a tapered passage.--

✓ From page 8, line 28 through page 9, line 6, please rewrite the paragraph as follows:

a3 The base 12 of access port 10 comprises an upper shell 18, a base plate 20, an internal cylinder 22, and a vertically reciprocating plunger 23 disposed within an actuator block 24, where the assembly of the plunger and actuator block are together disposed within the cylinder 22. As shown in Figs. 2 and 2A, a spring 26 urges the plunger 23 and actuator block 24 upwardly relative to the base 20. When the plunger 23 and actuator block 24 are in their upward position, the conduit 14 is pinched closed between an upper lip 28 which is a portion of the wall of cylinder 22 and a lower lip 30 which is portion of the actuator block 24. A proximal end of the conduit 14 is connected to the lower end of a tube 32 which depends into an interior volume of the actuator block 24. The depending tube 32 provides an axial bore 34 for receiving a needle N, as illustrated in Figs. 3 and 3A. A tapered region 33 is formed near the upper end of axial bore 34 and is sized to engage and seal against the outer side wall of a needle or other access tube which is introduced into the bore, as best seen in Fig. 3B.

✓ From page 9, line 32 through page 10, line 3, please rewrite the paragraph as follows:

a4 In a preferred aspect of the access port 10 of the present invention, the axial bore 34 will be tapered in the downward direction, as best seen in Fig. 3B, over region 33. The size of the bore and degree of the taper will be selected to frictionally engage conventional needles or other access tubes so that a tight seal is formed as the access tubes are inserted into the axial bore 34. The taper also provides a stop so that the needle N will not penetrate into the horizontal lumen defined by the conduit 14.